

# *Sketch*

---

*Volume 64, Number 2*

2000

*Article 28*

---

## Tornado

Emily Ekle\*

\*Iowa State University

Copyright ©2000 by the authors. *Sketch* is produced by The Berkeley Electronic Press (bepress).  
<http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/sketch>

## Tornado

It is a cyclonic summer  
and as we await a storm  
she lets me paint  
her toenails bright  
metallic blue, later  
in the basement  
dark like a closet,  
she bites  
a lifesaver to make  
a spark, but  
that doesn't work  
so she leans into  
me instead.  
pheromones,  
she says,  
and licks my elbow.  
pheromones,  
she says,  
and wraps her tongue  
around my earlobe.  
Pheromones,  
she says,  
and scrapes the skin  
of my neck with  
the edge of her teeth, later

we sit on the porch damp  
and steaming wood  
worn smooth from other  
evenings such as this.  
While water bugs dimple mud  
puddles in the drive, we  
peel away layers  
of an artichoke.  
As we work our way  
toward the center,  
she plucks a petal gently  
dips it in melted butter,  
on the way to her mouth  
it drips onto her leg,  
I suck it off as she pulls  
the petal through her teeth,  
she places it, emaciated,  
onto my thigh, aligning  
it with the already assembled  
rockette row of artichoke leaves.  
Breathing hot butter  
breath into my mouth,  
she says pheromones,  
pheromones, pheromones  
and plunges her teeth  
into the center, the heart  
of the artichoke. I say  
love love love.  
She chomps away,  
and swallows noisily.